CLAIM(S):

1.   A method of enhancing milk component production in a ruminant, the method comprising:

  providing a feed that comprises a sugar alcohol component; and

  supplying the sugar alcohol component to the abomasum of the ruminant.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein supplying the sugar alcohol component to the abomasum of the ruminant comprises:

  protecting the sugar alcohol component from alteration in the rumen of the ruminant; and

  orally feeding the feed to the ruminant.

3.   The method of claim 2, the method further comprising protecting the sugar alcohol component from any substantial alteration in the rumen of the ruminant.

4.   The method of claim 2, the method further comprising protecting the sugar alcohol component from any alteration in the rumen of the ruminant.

5.   The method of claim 1 wherein supplying the sugar alcohol component to the abomasum of the ruminant comprises placing the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant.

6.   The method of claim 5 wherein placing the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant comprises:

  providing a fistula into the abomasum of the ruminant; and

introducing the feed into the abomasum of the ruminant via the fistula.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein placing the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant comprises infusing the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant without allowing the feed to contact the rumen of the ruminant.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein enhancing milk component production comprises enhancing the weight percent of true protein, the weight percent of fat, the weight percent of lactose, the weight percent of total solids, or any combination of these in milk produced by the ruminant.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the sugar alcohol component is adonitol, arabitol, dulcitol, erythritol, galactitol, galaxitol, mannitol, inositol, perseitol, ribitol, rhamnitol, sorbitol, xylitol, glycerol, or any combination of these.

10. A method of feeding a ruminant, the method comprising:

providing a feed that comprises a sugar alcohol component; and

supplying the sugar alcohol component to the abomasum of the ruminant, the sugar alcohol component effective to enhance milk component production by the ruminant.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein supplying the sugar alcohol component to the abomasum of the ruminant comprises:

protecting the sugar alcohol component from alteration in the rumen of the ruminant; and

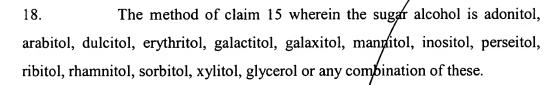orally feeding the feed to the ruminant.

12.   The method of claim 10 wherein supplying the sugar alcohol component to the abomasum of the ruminant comprises placing the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant without allowing the feed to come into contact with any other stomach portions of the ruminant.

13.   The method of claim 10 wherein the sugar alcohol component is adonitol, arabitol, dulcitol, erythritol, galactitol, galaxitol, mannitol, inositol, perseitol, ribitol, rhamnitol, sorbitol, xylitol, glycerol or any combination of these.

14.   The method of claim 10 wherein the sugar alcohol component that is supplied to the abomasum of the ruminant is effective to enhance the weight percent of true protein, the weight percent of fat, the weight percent of lactose, the weight percent of total solids, or any combination of these in milk produced by the ruminant.

15.   A method of producing feed for a ruminant, the method comprising:
        combining a sugar alcohol and at least one additional component to
            form the feed; and
        protecting the sugar alcohol from alteration in the rumen of the
            ruminant.

16.   The method of claim 15 wherein the sugar alcohol is effective to enhance milk component production by the ruminant.

17.   The method of claim 15 wherein the sugar alcohol, when supplied to the abomasum of the ruminant, is effective to enhance the weight percent of true protein, the weight percent of fat, the weight percent of lactose, the weight percent of total solids, or any combination of these in milk produced by the ruminant.

18.   The method of claim 15 wherein the sugar alcohol is adonitol, arabitol, dulcitol, erythritol, galactitol, galaxitol, mannitol, inositol, perseitol, ribitol, rhamnitol, sorbitol, xylitol, glycerol or any combination of these.
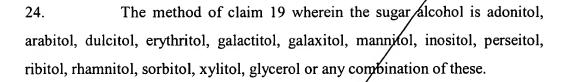
19.   A method of feeding a ruminant, the method comprising:

            providing a feed that comprises a sugar alcohol; and

            supplying the feed directly to the abomasum of the ruminant

20.   The method of claim 19 wherein the sugar alcohol is effective to enhance milk component production by the ruminant.

21.   The method of claim 19 wherein the sugar alcohol is effective to enhance milk component production by the ruminant by enhancing the weight percent of true protein, the weight percent of fat, the weight percent of lactose, the weight percent of total solids, or any combination of these in milk produced by the ruminant.

22   The method of claim 19 wherein supplying the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant comprises:

            providing a fistula into the abomasum of the ruminant; and

            introducing the feed into the abomasum of the ruminant via the

                 fistula.

23.   The method of claim 19 wherein supplying the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant comprises infusing the feed directly into the abomasum of the ruminant without allowing the feed to come into contact with any other stomach portions of the ruminant.

24.   The method of claim 19 wherein the sugar alcohol is adonitol, arabitol, dulcitol, erythritol, galactitol, galaxitol, mannitol, inositol, perseitol, ribitol, rhamnitol, sorbitol, xylitol, glycerol or any combination of these.

25.   A feed material, the feed material effective to enhance milk component production in a ruminant when the feed material is supplied to the ruminant, the feed material comprising:

      a sugar alcohol, the sugar alcohol protected from alteration in the rumen of the ruminant; and

      at least one additional ingredient.

26.   The feed material of claim 19 wherein the sugar alcohol is adonitol, arabitol, dulcitol, erythritol, galactitol, galaxitol, mannitol, inositol, perseitol, ribitol, rhamnitol, sorbitol, xylitol, glycerol or any combination of these.

27.   The feed material of claim 19 wherein the feed material is effective to enhance the weight percent of true protein, the weight percent of fat, the weight percent of lactose, the weight percent of total solids, or any combination of these in milk produced by the ruminant when the feed material is supplied to the ruminant.